



CENTER OF EXCELLENCE
IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT
& HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

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**ASIA-PACIFIC DISEASE OUTBREAK
/SURVEILLANCE REPORT**

Week of Sep 27, 2004

ASIA

ASIA Region on Avian Influenza Alert as Human Death Toll Reaches 30

Countries in Asia are trying to contain the recent outbreaks of avian influenza as the H5N1 virus claimed more lives in Thailand and Vietnam, bringing the regional death toll from the virus to 30 since the beginning of the year. When the disease resurfaced in Vietnam in early August it killed at least 3 people. The World Health Organization (WHO) dispatched experts to Vietnam to help contain the disease. Vietnam's Health Ministry confirmed that a 14-month-old boy in Hanoi died of bird flu on September 5 (the country's 20th victim). Vietnam continues to enforce measures to control the virus. The WHO said the spread of this virus from one country to another is likely the result of the trade in birds, or migratory birds infected with the virus. Cambodia has still not recorded a human case of avian influenza, despite outbreaks in chicken stocks outside Phnom Penh on September 20.

Source:

· *The Nation*, Sep 30, 2004, <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/page.news.php3?clid=5&id=121733&usrsess=1>

BANGLADESH

Two Children Die of Pneumonia in Joypurhat

Pneumonia in the Joypurhat district has claimed the lives of two children and affected over 100 others in the past week. A total of five children have died of pneumonia in the district in the past month. Pneumonia still continues to be a problem in flooded areas.

Source:

· *News From Bangladesh*, Sep 29, 2004, <http://www.bangladesh-web.com/view.php?hidDate=2004-09-29&hidType=LOC&hidRecord=000000000000000023330>

Diarrhea Kills 125 in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is still suffering from consequences of the recent floods, with diarrhea claiming 125 lives over the past two months. Since 1 August, over 260,000 people have been suffering from diarrhea caused by drinking polluted water. Relief workers fear that the actual figures might be much higher. The International Center for Diarrheal Diseases Research, Bangladesh, (ICDDR) in Dhaka has registered 600 to 700 patients, mostly from the capital and its outskirts, in the past week. Bangladesh is still

struggling to recover from massive floods in July and August that inundated half the country, killing at least 750 people and affecting over 30 million.

Source:

· NewKerala.com, Sep 29, 2004, <http://www.newkerala.com/news-daily/news/features.php?action=fullnews&id=33803>
· News From Bangladesh, Sep 29, 2004, <http://www.bangladesh-web.com/view.php?hidDate=2004-09-29&hidType=NAT&hidRecord=000000000000000023305>
· Scotsman.com, Sep 28, 2004, <http://news.scotsman.com/latest.cfm?id=3554789>

HONG KONG

Additional New Cases of Leptospirosis in Hong Kong

Two new cases of leptospirosis have been confirmed in Hong Kong involving participants of the hiking activity "Team Challenge 36" held in August 2004. Neither family members nor team members of either patient have any symptoms of the disease. Leptospiral organisms can be found in some animals including rodents, cattle, pigs, horses, and dogs. Most human infections occur through contact with urine excreted by infected mammals primarily through skin abrasions, open wounds or mucous membranes, and occasionally through ingestion or inhalation. Leptospirosis is normally not transmitted from person to person, and the incubation period is usually between 4 and 19 days. Patients with leptospirosis commonly present with a flu-like illness with high fever, headache, muscle pains, red eyes, sore throat and rash. The disease can be treated effectively with antibiotics. The incidence of leptospirosis is low in Hong Kong.

Source:

· News-Medical.net, Sep 28, 2004, <http://www.news-medical.net/?id=5114>
· Promed Mail, Sep 28, 2004, http://www.promedmail.org/pls/askus/f?p=2400:1001:15943422111519607715::NO::F2400_P1001_BACK_PAGE,F2400_P1001_PUB_MAIL_ID:1000,26816

Enterovirus 71 Confirmed in Another Child in Hong Kong

Enterovirus 71 has been confirmed in a 2-year-old girl, bringing this year's total number of cases in Hong Kong to 33. The girl developed fever, an oral blister, malaise, and lower limb weakness on 11 September 2004. Her condition is stable, and she has been in Queen Mary Hospital since 18 September 2004. Her cousin, a 21-month-old boy, developed fever, cough, and vomiting on 9 September 2004 and was admitted to Queen Elizabeth Hospital on 11 September 2004. He recovered and was discharged. Further test results are pending. The Centre for Health Protection called on citizens to guard against infection and to maintain good personal and environmental hygiene.

Source:

· Health & Community News, Hong Kong, Sep 27, 2004, <http://www.news.gov.hk/en/category/healthandcommunity/040927/html/040927en05005.htm>
· Promed Mail, Sep 28, 2004, http://www.promedmail.org/pls/askus/f?p=2400:1001:12357870765602214801::NO::F2400_P1001_BACK_PAGE,F2400_P1001_PUB_MAIL_ID:1000,26810

INDIA

Sanitary Worker Strike May Precipitate Epidemic in Uttaranchal, India

Medical experts are warning of a severe epidemic that may follow an indefinite strike by over 6,000 sanitary workers in Uttaranchal, which has already accumulated thousands of tons of rubbish. According to preliminary findings of the Uttaranchal Pollution Control Board, because of the strike, which is already into its second week, nearly 12,000 tons

of rubbish has been accumulated in the state. Health department officials say that if the rubbish is not removed from Dehradun and other cities immediately, the situation may precipitate an epidemic. Doctors and medical experts in Doon hospital and other medical centers also say there is no arrangement to dispose of medical waste which is rotting in parts of Dehradun.

Source:

· Press Trust of India News, Oct 01, 2004,
[http://www.ptinews.com/pti/ptisite.nsf/\\$All/7D08DE6875C4767465256F200030AF99?OpenDocument](http://www.ptinews.com/pti/ptisite.nsf/$All/7D08DE6875C4767465256F200030AF99?OpenDocument)

MYANMAR

Cholera Outbreak in Myanmar

An outbreak of dysentery in Mandalay, following massive flooding in central Burma in late July 2004, has been attributed to the emergence of the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*, or cholera, in early September 2004. During the first week of September medical experts at hospitals across the city detected about 10 new cases of cholera each day with symptoms of severe diarrhea, vomiting and dehydration. Several people died, although it is not clear whether cholera was the cause of death in any of the cases.

Source:

· Irrawaddy.org, Sep 27, 2004, <http://www.irrawaddy.org/aviewer.asp?a=4016&z=9>
· Promed Mail, Oct 01, 2004,
http://www.promedmail.org/pls/askus/f?p=2400:1001:1396913872396876936::NO::F2400_P1001_BACK_PAGE,F2400_P1001_PUB_MAIL_ID:1000,26838

NEPAL

Gastroenteritis Affects 300 Families in Saptar, Nepal

Over 300 families have been affected by a sudden outbreak of gastroenteritis in the Saptari district in Nepal. About 175 disease-affected patients are undergoing treatment at Sagarmatha Zonal Hospital in Rajbiraj and most of them are reported to be in serious condition. Lack of proper sanitation is believed to be the cause of the disease outbreak. Medical teams have been dispatched in the region to control the disease.

Source:

· Kantipur Online, Sep 26, 2004, <http://www.kantipuronline.com/kolnews.php?&nid=17788>

PAKISTAN

Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever Kills One Person in Rawalpindi, Pakistan

A death from Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever virus (CCHFV) infection has been confirmed and the Ministry of Health has now issued precautionary instructions to the Punjab Health Department on how to deal with a possible outbreak. The physician who first attended the patient also developed symptoms and was placed in isolation to avoid further transmission. Following the NIH guidelines on CCHFV, a task force of health personnel and officials from the agriculture and livestock departments, has been formed to prevent further outbreaks. The affected area has been surveyed, and a plan is in place to spray cattle sheds to kill infected ticks. A campaign has also been started to raise public awareness about the disease. Ribazole [Ribavirin], is being used to treat suspected cases of CCHFV. Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever is transmitted to

humans by ticks and can be acquired also by direct contact with blood and secretions of infected patients.

Source:

· Daily Times Online, Sep 27, 2004, http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=story_26-9-2004_pg7_4
· Promed Mail, Sep 27, 2004, http://www.promedmail.org/pls/askus/f?p=2400:1001:14980710504719055292::NO::F2400_P1001_BACK_PAGE,F2400_P1001_PUB_MAIL_ID:1010,26794

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Over 50 AIDS Cases Per Week in PNG Province

Health officials at Mt. Gagen General Hospital in Papua New Guinea's Western Province are reporting eight to nine new cases of HIV/AIDS each day (56 to 63 cases per week) with mother-to-child transmission dominating. Most of those infected are between 15 and 35 years of age. Precipitating factors include the rapid increase in poverty, social activities at night and the consumption of home brew and marijuana. Official figures put the number of confirmed cases in Western Highlands in December 2003 at 1,290. Health officials believe the figure will triple by the end of the year (2004).

Source:

· The National, Oct 01, 2004, <http://www.thenational.com.pg/>
· Pacific Islands Report, Oct 01, 2004, <http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2004/October/10-01-03.htm>

THAILAND

Two New Cases of Avian Influenza Confirmed in Thailand

The Ministry of Public Health in Thailand has confirmed two new cases of H5N1 avian influenza in humans. Thailand has reported 15 cases, of which 10 were fatal, since the first human cases were detected in January of this year. The most recent cases are part of a family cluster of four cases under investigation to determine whether human-to-human transmission may have occurred. Such a situation would be cause for alarm, as it might signal the start of an influenza pandemic. Surveillance for additional cases, among health workers and in the wider community, has been greatly intensified and hospitals nationwide have been placed on heightened alert for further cases.

Source:

· WHO Website, Sep 28, 2004, http://www.who.int/csr/don/2004_09_28a/en/
· Reuters UK, Sep 28, 2004, <http://www.reuters.co.uk/newsArticle.jhtml?type=healthNews&storyID=6350477&ion=news>
· Promed Mail, Sep 28, 2004, http://www.promedmail.org/pls/askus/f?p=2400:1001:15943422111519607715::NO::F2400_P1001_BACK_PAGE,F2400_P1001_PUB_MAIL_ID:1000,26812

VIETNAM

Additional Death From Avian Influenza A (H5N1) Virus Infection Confirmed in Vietnam

The death of a 14-month-old boy on 5 September 2004 has been confirmed to have been caused by avian influenza A (H5N1) virus infection. This is the third death from the virus in Viet Nam since August 2004. The baby died in Hanoi about a week after contracting the virus. The World Health Organization says that avian influenza is not yet a serious threat for the general public. As of 28 September 2004, the WHO lists the total number of laboratory confirmed human cases of avian influenza A (H5N1) virus infection in East Asia as 42, including 30 deaths; 15 of the cases, and 10 of the deaths,

have occurred in Thailand, and 27 cases with 20 deaths have occurred in Viet Nam.

Source:

· Xinhuanet News Agency, Sep 29, 2004, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2004-09/29/content_2038070.htm

· Promed Mail, Sep 29, 2004,

http://www.promedmail.org/pls/askus/f?p=2400:1001:4091335050540575208::NO::F2400_P1001_BACK_PAGE,F2400_P1001_PUB_MAIL_ID:1000,26824

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